

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSAE-00  
PM-03 DODE-00 MCT-01 SY-02 ACDA-10 L-01 SP-02  
INRE-00 SSO-00 /047 W  
-----022940 311622Z /43

O R 311430Z MAY 78  
FM USMISSION USBERLIN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6905  
AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE  
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
USMISSION USNATO  
AMCONSUL BREMEN  
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF  
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT  
AMCONSUL HAMBURG  
AMCONSUL MUNICH  
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USBERLIN 1253

LIMDIS

E.O.11652: GDS  
TAGS: PGOV, BQG, AKB, PINS  
SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT CRISIS FOLLOWING JAIL BREAK OF JUNE 2 TERRORIST  
TILL MEYER

REF: USBERLIN 1232 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY. THE BREAKOUT FROM MOABIT PRISON ON MAY 27 OF  
TERRORIST TILL MEYER HAS PRECIPITATED STOBBE AND HIS  
LOCAL COALITION INTO A SERIOUS AND UNEXPECTED CRISIS.  
DEMANDS FOR THE RESIGNATION OF FDP JUSTICE SENATOR  
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BAUMANN ARE WIDESPREAD, AND IT IS PARTICULARLY AWKWARD  
TO EVADE THEM GIVEN THE 1976 EXAMPLE SET BY FDP JUSTICE  
SENATOR OXFORD WHO ACCEPTED THE POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY  
FOR THE BREAKOUT OF FOUR JUNE 2 TERRORIST WOMEN AND  
RESIGNED. ALTHOUGH STOBBE'S PERSONAL POSITION IS NOT  
ENDANGERED, HE IS FACE WITH A DIFFICULT EXERCISE OF  
STATECRAFT AS TO HOW HE WILL LIMIT DAMAGE TO THE COALITION

AND OFFSET A PERCEPTIBLE DROP IN PUBLIC CONFIDENCE. END SUMMARY.

1. SINCE THE BREAKOUT THERE HAVE BEEN ALMOST DAILY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SITUATION. ON MAY 29 BAUMANN AND INTERIOR SENATOR ULRICH REPORTED ON THE PRISON BREAK TO THE LEGAL AND SECURITY COMMITTEES OF THE BERLIN PARLIAMENT. THE CDU DEMANDED THE RESIGNATION OR DISMISSAL OF BAUMANN BY 1700 ON MAY 30, FAILING WHICH THEY STATED THEIR INTENTION TO TABLE A MOTION OF NO-CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT ON THURSDAY, JUNE 1. STOBBE AND THE SPD/FDP REJECTED THIS DEMAND, WITH THE ARGUMENT THAT FURTHER INVESTIGATION OF THE MATTER IS NEEDED, AND THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO AUTOMATICITY IN RESIGNATION OF OFFICIALS IN SUCH CASES BECAUSE THE PRACTICE WOULD REWARD TERRORISTS BY GIVING THEM A TOOL TO DISRUPT THE ORDERLY PROCESSES OF GOVERNMENT. BECAUSE BAUMANN REFUSED TO RESIGN THE CDU WILL BRING SEPARATE MOTIONS OF NO-CONFIDENCE AGAINST BAUMANN AND STOBBE WHICH WILL NECESSITATE A VOTE 48 HOURS LATER ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 3. ALL MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENT WILL HAVE TO ATTEND, AND A NUMBER WHO ARE PRESENTLY OUT OF TOWN HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO RETURN TO BERLIN.

2. IN ADDITION THE CDU HAS ASKED FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT FACT-FINDING BODY (AS THEY DID AFTER THE 1976 BREAKOUT). THE COALITION, HOWEVER, IS CALLING CONFIDENTIAL

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FOR A INVESTIGATION BY PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION. THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE BREAKOUT WILL BE DEBATED IN A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE HOUSE ON JUNE 1.

3. THE COALITION'S DEFENSIVE MANEUVERS HAVE BEEN MADE MORE DIFFICULT BY THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES:  
(A) ON MAY 11 THE CDU BROUGHT AN INTERPELLATION ASKING FOR BAUMANN'S RESPONSE TO CHARGES THAT VISITORS TO THE MOABIT PRISON WERE NOT ADEQUATELY CHECKED IN TERMS OF IDENTITY OR WHAT THEY WERE CARRYING WITH THEM. THE COALITION PREPARED AN ANSWER TO THIS WHICH BOTH BAUMANN AND STOBBE SIGNED OFF ON ON MAY 26, THE DAY BEFORE THE BREAKOUT. THEIR ANSWER, WHICH IS NOW REVEALED AS PATENTLY FICTIONAL, ASSERTED THAT ALL VISITS WERE IN FACT CONTROLLED IN TERMS OF IDENTITY AND CONTENTS OF WHAT THEY BROUGHT INTO THE PRISON.

(B) THE IMPRESSION OF DIGNIFIED SLOPPINESS WHICH THE EVENT HAS CREATED. ONE OF THE TWO FEMALE DELIVERERS WHO ENTERED THE PRISON UNDER FALSE LAWYER IDENTITY PAPERS CARRIED A SUBMACHINEGUN. THE PUBLIC IS UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND WHY ALL PERSONS ENTERING AN AIRCRAFT ARE SEARCHED FOR WEAPONS, WHEREAS THIS IS NOT DONE UPON ENTRY INTO A MAXIMUM SECURITY

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MCT-01 SY-02 ACDA-10 L-01 SP-02 INRE-00 SSO-00  
PM-03 DODE-00 /047 W  
-----023313 311621Z /43

O R 311430Z MAY 78  
FM USMISSION USBERLIN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6906  
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AMCONSUL FRANKFURT  
AMCONSUL HAMBURG  
AMCONSUL MUNICH  
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USBERLIN 1253

LIMDIS

(C) THE BERLIN FDP LOOKS PARTICULARLY ABSURD IN  
THEIR PRESENT DEFENSE OF BAUMANN BECAUSE OF THEIR ACTION  
LAST WEEK IN PASSING A RESOLUTION CALLING OFR THE DISMISSAL  
OF FDP INTERIOR MINISTER MAIHOFFER FOR HIS ERRORS OF  
OMISSION IN NOT KNOWING ABOUT DETAILS OF CURRENT  
BUNDESGRENZSHUETZ SEARCHES FOR AND REPORTING OF POSSESSION  
BY TRAVELERS OF LEFTIST LITERATURE. A FEW DAYS  
LATER THEY HAVE TAKEN PRECISELY THE OPPOSITE POSITION WITH REFERENCE  
TO BAUMANN.

(D) PUBLIC REACTION IS ALMOST UNIFORMLY UNFAVORABLE.  
THE INDEPENDENT TAGESSPIEGEL EDITORIALY DEMANDED BAUMANN'S  
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DISMISSAL AS HAS A GREAT DEAL OF TV AN SPRINGER PRESS COMMENTARY. BOTH THE POLICEMAN'S UNION AND THE UNION OF PRISON WORKERS HAVE ALSO CALLED FOR BAUMANN TO GO. ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT PUBLICLY KNOWN, THE FEDERAL PRSECUTOR (OBERLE) IN THE LORENZ CASE HAS TOLD US THAT HE HAS SEVERAL TIMES COMPLAINED TO BAUMANN ABOUT LAX SECURITY IN MOABIT.

4. THE OVERRIDING REASON FOR THE PRESENT STANCE OF STOBBE AND THE SPD IS THAT HE HAS TO PRESERVE COALITION SOLIDARITY. THIS IS THE SAME CONSIDERATION WHICH REPORTEDLY LED YSTERDAY TO A CLOSING OF SPD RANKS AROUND FDP MINISTER MAIHOFFER IN THE BONN COALITION. THE BERLIN FDP IS IN A VERY WOBBLY STATE, AND THERE ARE INDEED DOUBTS AS TO ITS ABILITY TO ABSORB THE BODY BLOW WHICH WOULD RESULT FROM BAUMANN'S DEPARTURE. AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION IS THAT NO EASY FDP REPLACEMENTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR BAUMANN. HIS RESIGNATION WOULD MEAN THAT FEDERAL AFFAIRS SENATOR KORBER WOULD HAVE TO TAKE OVER HIS PORTFOLIO TEMPORARILY. THERE ARE RUMORS BEING SPREAD BY THE SPRINGER PRESS THAT AS A LAST RESORT MAYOR LUDER WOULD BE PREPARED TO SURRENDER THE ECONOMICS PORTFOLIO AND BECOME THE SENATOR FOR JUSTICE, IN WHICH CASE HE WOULD BE REPLACE AS ECONOMICS SENATOR BY LOERG SCHLEGEL, HIS PRESENT DEPUTY. THERE IS A WIDESPREAD TENDENCY TO SEE IN THE PRESENT PROTECTIVE TACTICS OF THE COALITION A CYNICAL DESIRE TO WIN TIME THROUGH THE SUNDAY ELECTIONS IN LOWER SAXONY AND HMABURG.

5. THERE IS ANOTHER MOTIVE OF SELF-INTEREST IN STOBBE'S POSITON. THE FDP, BY CONVERTING ITS SCANDAL INTO A "KOALITIONSFRAGE," REPORTEDLY HAS SAID THAT IT WILL NOT TAKE THE HEAT ALONE. IF BAUMANN MUST RESIGN, SO MUST SPD SENATOR FOR THE INTEROIR ULRICH. THE CDU HAS NOT YET

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FOCUSSED ON ULRICH, SINCE THE POLICE FAILURE IS SO FAR PERCEIVED AS LIMITED TO THE CIRCUMSTANCE THAT THE OUSIDE PERIMETER POLICE WER ENOT INFORMED BY WALKIE-TALKIE OF THE ALARM. BUT THERE IS A THICKER DOSSIER OF POLICE FAILURES WHICH WILL PROBABLY SURFACE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. WE HAVE HEARD THAT THE POLICE AND JUSTICE AUTHORITIES ON MAY 26 DISCUSSED REPORTS OF A PLANNED BREAKOUT (NO DATE GIVEN) ONE DAY BEFORE I HAPPENED. THE BREAKOUT AND LATER ESCAPE WERE PUTATIVELY CARRIED OUT FROM A JUNE 2 "SAFEHOUSE" HICH WAS KNOWN TO THE POLICE WEEKS BEFORE THE MAY 27 ACTION. NO WATCH WAS PUT ON S-BAHNS FOR FIVE HOURS AFTER THE BREAKOUT. IT IS NOW BELIEVED BY THE STAATSSCHUTZ THAT THE PERPETRATORS PLUS MEYER, AFTER CHANGING DISGUISES, ESCAPED AN HOUR OR SO LATER BY

S-BAHN TO EAST BERLIN, FROM WHERE THEY MAY HAVE FLOWN  
AWAY VIA SCHOENEFELD.

6. ADDED TO ALL THIS IS THE GROWING TENSION CAUSED IN THE  
LAST TWO DAYS BY CASES OF DIRECT ARMED ACTIONS AGAINST  
LAWYERS IN BERLIN. (A LAWYER WAS SHOT IN LEG THIS MORNING.  
SEPTTEL.)

7. IT IS HARD TO SEE HOW THE FDP CAN LONG PRESERVE ITS  
PRESENT SENAT COMPOSITION BY SAVING BAUMANN, WHO MUST  
EMERGE AS THE REAL AUTHOR OF THE FICTION IN THE ANSWER OF  
MAY 26 THAT VISITORS TO MOABIT WERE CHECKED FOR IDENTITY  
AND AS TO WHAT THEY WERE CARRYING. STOBBE'S CO-SIGNATURE  
OF THIS REPORT IS A SMALL MATTER, BUT IT WILL NOT ADD TO  
THIS REPUTATION AS AN INFORMED MANAGER. HIS REAL PROBLEM,  
IRONIC AND IRRITATING, IS THAT HE MUST SHIELD THE FDP  
THROUGH THIS CRISIS AS THE INDISPENSABLE PRICE OF MAINTAIN-  
ING THE COALITION. GEORGE

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## Message Attributes

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